THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) As per the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed between Alliance Air and the North Eastern Council (NEC), the NEC is providing a budgetary support of Rs. 35 crores per annum to Alliance Air with effect from 02.01.2003 for a period of 5 years of operation of 4 ATR-42 aircraft in the North East Region.

Improvement of facilities at airports

*26. SHRI T.T.V. DHINAKARAN: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the percentage of growth of domestic air traffic in the country during the last three years, year-wise;

(b) the details of investment in infrastructure development in airports during the three years, year-wise;

(c) the reasons for the frequent delay in take off/landing of aircrafts of national as well as private carriers; and

(d) the steps taken to improve passenger facilities that have suffered due to increase in the volume of air traffic?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) A growth of 9.20%, 24.97% and 22.75% has been registered in domestic passengers traffic during 2003, 2004 and 2005 respectively. The first 6 months of 2006 have registered a growth of 50.24% in passenger traffic over the corresponding period in 2005.

(b) Airports Authority of India (AAI) made investment for development of airports of Rs. 566.22 crores, Rs. 606.49 crores and Rs. 876.08 crores during 2003-04, 2004-05 and 2005-06 respectively.

(c) Delays in take off/landing of aircraft takes place due to congestion of traffic during peak hours particularly at Delhi and Mumbai airports due to bunching of flights and ATC operation. Delays also take place due to technical snages on aircraft, non-availability of crew, adverse weather conditions and consequental delays etc.

(d) The International airports at Delhi and Mumbai have been restructured through private sector participation for its modernization though ATC operations continue to premain with Airports Authority of India and security with Government. Apart from this, AAI has decided to modernize 35 selected non-metro airports to world-class standards. Improvement of passenger facilities is a continuous process and AAI has taken up the expansion and modification of Terminal Buildings, construction of new terminal buildings, expansion of aircraft parking stands. construction of new aircraft parking stands, improvement of car part, approach road etc. to meet the requirement of increased volume of air traffic at various airports in the country.

Upheaval in stock market

*27. SHRI GIREESH KUMAR SANGHI:
SHRI RAJKUMAR DHOOT:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have ascertained the reasons of the recent upheaval in the stock market;

(b) if so, whether it is a fact that one of the major causes of such upheaval was large scale selling by the Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs);

(c) if so, whether Government would consider it safe to link social safety, instruments like insurance and pension schemes with uncertain equity market that may deplete the returns; and

(d) what steps are being considered by Government to insulate such schemes from upheavals caused by speculative motives of FIIs?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM):(a) The movement in stock market indices is a function of many factors including investors' perceptions of the economy, the sector or an index stock. Movements of stock market also depend on economic factors, domestic and international events, market sentiments, corporate performance and prospects of future economic growth. The stock market capitalises the present and future values of growth opportunities while evaluating the growth of all sectors in the economy.

Several factors such as rising crude prices, increase in the interest rates by developed countries, decrease in fund flows to emerging markets